

and the committee, was so compelling, and the misdirection and information so badly flawed that Boeing was given, that the GAO overturned that decision.

The Air Force has 60 days to respond, but let us hope that we can come together and follow the leadership of Mr. DICKS and get those tankers built here in this country.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE COPS PROGRAM

(Mr. WEINER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for the United States Senate to free the COPS program. We here in this body, by an overwhelming bipartisan majority, voted to reauthorize the single greatest legislative weapon frankly ever passed by Congress to help reduce crime.

It reauthorized the highly successful COPS program, authorizing the hiring of another 50,000 new cops, authorizing hiring of special terrorism cops for cities like New York that have cops that specialize simply in combating terrorism.

Now, that same bill is held hostage in the Senate, frankly, by my Republican colleagues. The time has come for us to realize that if there has been one program that has been democratic, with a small D, meaning it's had beneficial effects all throughout the country, it's been the COPS program. Whether it's a small sheriff's department or a large police department like New York City, the program has been a success.

We should keep on pushing. There are a lot of things we disagree on, but frankly, this should be one that unifies us. This will give us a chance to modernize this program, get some money into the pipeline in States and localities so that they can go ahead and hire more police officers and continue the successes we have had reducing crime.

□ 1730

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each without prejudice to the resumption of legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ILLEGAL ALIEN CRIME REPORTING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of the House the issue of illegal alien crime.

As many of my colleagues are aware, over the past year crimes committed by illegal aliens have been at the forefront of our national media.

In Los Angeles, an illegal alien has been charged with the March 2008 murder of a young athlete and scholar, Jamiel Shaw. Shaw was gunned down outside his home in a senseless act of violence.

In New Jersey, an illegal alien has been charged with the August 2007 execution-style slaying of three New York college students and the shooting of another. This illegal alien suspect was previously granted bail on child rape and aggravated assault charges.

And in my home State of North Carolina, an illegal alien has been charged with second degree murder for driving drunk and killing a 22-year-old man in a car crash over last fall's Thanksgiving holiday.

While crimes like these are occurring all over the country, the public has no way of knowing the extent of the problem. This is because the Federal Government and the States do not report statistical information on criminal alien crimes. It is for this reason I have introduced H.R. 6192, the Illegal Alien Crime Reporting Act.

Last week, I sent a Dear Colleague letter to every Member of the House to inform them of this legislation. The bill would require States to submit in-depth statistics on illegal alien criminal activity in order to receive funding from the Department of Homeland Security. It would also require all Federal agencies to submit data on criminal activity by illegal aliens. And lastly, the bill would require the FBI to compile this information and produce an annual publication similar to its existing Uniform Crime Report with detailed statistics on illegal alien crimes.

Mr. Speaker, nothing is more important than the security of our Nation and the safety of our citizens. I hope that my colleagues will take the time to consider the issue of illegal alien crime and join us as a cosponsor of the Illegal Alien Crime Reporting Act.

ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to express the strong feelings that I and many others have on the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.

Israel was created by a U.N. resolution 60 years ago. People who have stressed the importance of U.N. resolutions with regard to the Middle East sometimes forget to note that when a U.N. resolution was passed which cre-

ated the State of Israel in a fairly small part of what had then been Palestine, it evoked violent opposition from almost all of Israel's neighbors. That is, those countries which launched an armed attack aimed at obliterating Israel as it was born, in defiance of a U.N. resolution, do not come with clean hands when they talk now about living up to every U.N. resolution. That's no reason to ignore them, but it is a context that ought to be clear.

There are a number of perspectives that people bring to the existence of Israel and its history. There is one that I want to talk about in particular as a liberal.

By all of the values that motivate me to be in public life, the State of Israel is the only nation in the Middle East today that qualifies as a nation that respects them. Whether it is the principle of nondiscrimination—and some things are very controversial in their own country—the rights of women, free speech, the rights of gay men and lesbians, Israel stands out by a very strong margin over all of its neighbors.

I do want to address some of my friends on the left who are critical of some of the geopolitical aspects of this. It's legitimate to do it. Indeed, if you want to hear criticism of the approach Israel takes towards the peace process or the question of settlements, one of the best places to go is Israel. Because unlike every other Middle East nation, Israel is a place where democracy thrives. Indeed, one of the important lessons the existence of Israel teaches the world is that those who argue that if you have threats to your national security, democracy becomes a luxury, are wrong.

Israel was born under attack. It has lived its entire 60 years to date with the great hostility of its neighbors. It has fought a number of wars. And it is today confronted by many nations, Iran, for example, that profess to be interested in its obliteration. Despite that, it has maintained a strong democracy; governments win and governments lose. And the Israeli High Court has a record, frankly, that in some ways exceeds our own U.S. Supreme Court in vindicating civil liberties.

Now, having said that, I will add that I am critical of some aspects of Israel policy. The point, however, is that that's a right that people have within Israel to exercise those differences that others don't. I thought the recent comments by Secretary Rice that were somewhat critical of what Israel was doing were useful in helping move towards the peace process.

On the other hand, it ought to be clear, and I do believe Israel should continue to maintain its willingness to withdraw from most of the West Bank, I think they should be removing settlements, but it must be remembered, Israel did withdraw from southern Lebanon and it did withdraw from Gaza in the face of a good deal of controversy at home, one under Prime Minister

Barak, one under Prime Minister Sharon, of two different parties.

Tragically, in both cases, Israel's voluntary withdrawal was followed by the entrenchment in those two areas of organizations dedicated not simply to territorial change, but to Israel's obliteration, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza. And they have used those places from which Israel withdrew as bases for attacks. I understand the emotional reaction that says, "We'll never do that again." I think it would be wrong; I do not think it would be in Israel's best interest. That does not mean they should not be able to defend themselves, of course they should.

But the fundamental point is this: Yes, there are serious issues about how to pursue peace. Nowhere are they more openly debated than within Israel itself, and that is one of the great glories of its 60 years.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A further message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

ENERGY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that happens when you come to the well and you debate somebody, a lot of facts get distorted and they're really not very accurate. So tonight I would like to quote some accurate figures for my colleagues in their offices. And if I were talking to the people of America—I know I can't, but if I were talking to the people of America, I would ask them to listen to these figures as well.

We import 4.3 million barrels of oil a day, that's for gasoline, we import that much per day. We actually use 21.5 million barrels, but we have to import 4.3 million barrels of oil because we only produce about 17.2 million barrels of oil. So we're short 4.3 million barrels of oil a day.

We have an emergency stockpile, but that would only last a short period of time. In April of 2008, the U.S. Geological Survey announced that an estimated 3.65 billion barrels of oil and 1.85 trillion cubic feet of untapped natural gas exists in Montana and North Dakota. If we could go after those reserves, we could start reducing the price of gas at the pump and energy for people all across this country.

In the ANWR, it holds the single largest deposit of oil in the entire United States. It's 10.4 billion barrels of oil, and it's more than double the proven reserves in the entire State of Texas. And according to the Department of Interior, there is an estimated 8.5 billion barrels of known oil reserves and 29.3 trillion cubic feet of known

natural gas reserves along our coastlines, with 82 percent of the oil and 95 percent of the gas located in the Gulf of Mexico.

Now, a lot of my colleagues have said, well, my gosh, the oil companies can go ahead and drill off the coast on the Continental Shelf. Well, let me just talk about that for a minute. Only 3 percent of the Continental Shelf has been given to the oil companies in the way of permits, and those permits run 5 to 10 years. Now, during that period of time they have to decide, with seismic tests, whether or not there's oil down there. If they think there's some oil down there, they drill a test well. And if they drill the test well and it doesn't show enough oil to make a profit, then they don't go ahead with it.

So most of these things that they have there right now are not being explored because there is not enough oil to make a profit. Those permits are not allowing them to make a profit, so they're not building those derricks. Those oil derricks cost as much as \$2 billion. Now, if you're going to invest \$2 billion in an oil derrick, you want to make darn sure that there's oil down there. And only 3 percent of our Continental Shelf is being used, 97 percent is not being used. And we could explore for oil all along that coastline, but we aren't able to because of the rigorous position that this Congress has put the oil companies in. And I'm not saying that the oil companies are totally free of any blame. You know, they have made an awful lot of profit. And my colleagues want to tax them on the windfall profits that they have been getting. If that's what they want to do, that's fine, but that's not going to give us one more drop of oil. The only way we can get one more drop of oil is to drill for it.

The Department of Interior estimates that there are untapped resources of about 86 billion barrels in the Gulf of Mexico and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Gulf of Mexico.

As I said, on the Outer Continental Shelf they have 1.76 billion acres of untapped resources and not leased on the Continental Shelf. And since the 1980s, the United States has prohibited oil and gas drilling on most of the Outer Continental Shelf, except for a limited area in the western Gulf of Mexico.

We could be energy independent if we just looked at our own resources. Approximately 121 companies own the rights of the Continental Shelf, but they lease only 3 percent of the Continental Shelf. And about 15 percent of the U.S. natural gas production and 27 percent of our oil production comes from that area.

They invest billions of dollars to acquire and maintain their leases, and unless there is oil down there that they find from seismic tests or a test well, they're certainly not going to build a \$2 billion oil derrick unless they can make a profit.

I would just like to say to my colleagues, the problem is that we're buying oil from the rest of the world; we're importing oil from the rest of the world. We're dependent on them. And the appetite for energy is growing very, very rapidly: China wants more oil; Taiwan wants more oil; countries all across the world that are expanding want more oil. So we're in competition with them for oil. We could be energy independent and not have to lean on countries like Saudi Arabia or Venezuela, but we aren't doing it, we continue to import.

One of my colleagues tonight said, you know, we want to clean up the environment. Well, if we import gas and oil, you think that's not going into the atmosphere? Why should we import Saudi oil when we can get our own? If we want to clean up the environment, we can do that the same way.

Whether or not we import the oil or use our own oil, it makes no sense not to drill. We could bring down the price of gasoline and energy in this country very rapidly if we announced tomorrow that we were going to start drilling in the United States of America.

Let me talk about one other thing that is very important. In 1981, we had 324 oil refineries in this country; today we have 148. We haven't built a new refinery in 30 years. And that's one of the problems, you've got to get the oil to market. You've got to produce gasoline and other energy products from the oil, and you have to have refineries to do that. And we haven't built a new refinery in over 30 years. And we had the refineries that we did have cut by more than 50 percent.

This country ought to move toward clean energy, but in the process we should make sure that we use our reserves to create gasoline here in America and not have to import all that oil. We ought to be drilling. We could be energy independent if we really wanted to.

□ 1745

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago, the American Printing House of the Blind opened its doors in my home district of Louisville, Kentucky, to make educational materials accessing to blind students. That day in 1858 stands as a milestone, not just for the education of the vision impaired but for the improved education of our community as a whole and the history of learning in the United States of America.

Prior to the early 19th century, it was generally presumed that, with rare exceptions, people who were blind simply didn't have the capacity to learn. Through experimentation and repeated